THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes. During the visit of Japanese Foreign Minister, Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, to India on August 12, 2004, India and Japan agreed that they "based on the firmly-shared recognition that both counries are legitimate candidates for the permanent membership of the Security Council in the light of the current realities of the international community, will support each other's candidature, and make utmost efforts and closely work together towards realising the reform " of the Security Council."

(b) A large number of leaders from various countries in their speeches both at the UN General Assembly as well as during the discussions in the relevant committee on the subject, referred to the necessity of UN institutional reforms, the expansion of the Security Council, the inclusion of new permanent members and India's credentials in this regard. Since such support is expressed in different forms, it is difficult to give a definitive number on countries which have specifically supported India.

Attacks on Tamil Fishermen

126.SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government took up the issue of attack on Tamil fishermen by the Sri Lankan Army/Navy with the Sri Lankan President during her visit to India in November, 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any assurance from the Sri Lankan President to put an end to the attack on Tamil fishermen by the authorities of Sri Lankan Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E!AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The problems being faced by Indian fishermen straying in advertently across the International Maritime Boundary Line to fish in Sri Lankan waters were taken up by Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister during their meetings with the president of Sri Lanka.

(c) and (d) The Sri Lankan President reiterated the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka to tackling the problem of straying fishermen in a humane and sympathetic manner. The Joint Press Statement issued after her visit states that "While agreeing to continue with the existing understandings on the humane treatment and early release of apprehended fishermen, it was decided to constitute a Joint Working Group which could meet frequently to deal with issues relating to straying fishermen, work out modalities for prevention of use of force against them and the early release of confiscated boats, and explore possibilities of working towards bilateral arrangements of licensed fishing."

Anti-Indian Organisations in Bangladesh

127. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Anti-Indian Jehadi organisations are mushrooming in Bangladesh coupled with Bangladesh Foreign Minister tirade against India on 7th September 2004;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Bangladesh's Foreign Minister launched yet one more tirade against India on 7th September 2004;

(c) whether Government have lodged a formal protest to Bangladesh;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of Bangladesh Government thereto; and

(e) in what manner Government propose! to deal with the threat to India's security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The Government has repeatedly taken up with the Government of Bangladesh, the issue of activities of Indian Insurgent Groups operating from Bangladesh soil. This Ministry has no information to verify whether these anti-India groups are jehadi in nature.

(b) Speaking at the inaugural session of the "India-Bangladesh Dialogue of Young Journalists" in Dhaka on Sept. 7, 2004, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mr Morshed Khan is reported to have made some negative remarks about India.